2018-2019 MIDPOINT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT BACK

You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.
Psalm 65:10 (NRSVE)

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
February 25, 2019	March 7, 2019	Click here to enter a date.

Lori DiMarco, Superintendent, Curriculum Leadership & Innovation; Academic ICT
Gina Iuliano Marrello, Superintendent, Student Success
Marina Vanayan, Senior Coordinator, Research

INFORMATION REPORT

Vision:
At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Mission:
The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.
We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

D. Koenig
Associate Director
of Academic Affairs

L. Noronha
Associate Director of Facilities,
Business and Community
Development, and
Chief Financial Officer
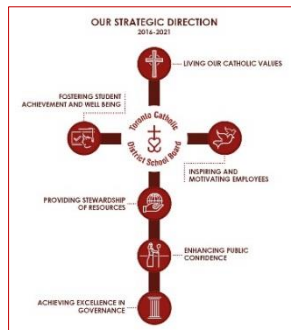
A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the 2018-2019 midpoint check reporting process that involves all TCDSB schools.   In January 2019, Principals were required to complete a digital standard midpoint report to share results of the work done with staff and students in the area of School Learning Improvement Planning.   The summary in this report includes the successes and the challenges related to professional learning initiatives that support the School Learning and Improvement Plan at the local level and which are also in line with the Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP).

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 10 hours.

A. PURPOSE

1. At the December 6, 2018 Student Achievement and Well-Being, Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee, Trustees received the report: Toronto Catholic District School Board K-12 Professional Development Plan for Student Achievement and Well Being 2018-19. Upon receipt, there was a motion to provide Trustees with a summary report of the successes and the challenges, at the midpoint, of the professional development initiatives to support the Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP).

B. BACKGROUND

1. Schools create a School Learning Improvement Plan through the development of a Professional Learning Form. When completing the Professional Learning Form schools look at detailed data for the individual students to determine an urgent critical learning need for the school, while supporting goals as outlined in the Board Learning Improvement Plan. A school goal is created to address the student urgent critical learning need. School teams also determine the professional learning goals for the staff so that they can work toward improving the student related learning needs and achieve the determined SMART goal. Professional learning sessions, supported by central staff, occur at the local level to build capacity thereby improving learning across the system.

2. The process for monitoring the School Learning Improvement Plans of each school was changed this year:

- This new process provides regular check-in points for Principals with the Areas Superintendent, and provides more specific and focused feedback with regard to progress on school goals.

- For the midpoint check (Jan-Feb), each school Principal created a report about school progress toward addressing the school's urgent critical student learning need and toward addressing the professional learning needs of staff in order to address the student learning needs.

- Schools were asked to show evidence of student progress to date related to addressing student needs, as well as identifying professional learning completed for staff members.

- Schools identified as intensive or increased support (64), by the Ministry, presented their midpoint check reports on January 30, 2019.

- All schools not identified as intensive or increased support, were to present their midpoint check reports on February 12. However, due to weather conditions, this was rescheduled to February 26 and 28.

- All midpoint check reports were presented to a group of professional colleagues, who provided actionable feedback to the Principal, to be used in further work related to the school goals, with school staff.

- The colleagues who provided feedback consisted of Ministry Student Achievement Officers, Area and Central Superintendents, Central Coordinators (who were previously Principals), Director of Education, Associate Director of Academic Affairs, Research Department staff and other Principals.

- In order to focus feedback, while each school Principal presented their report, colleagues were asked to identify an area in which the school is experiencing success and an area in which the school should focus next steps (challenge).

- In the Joanne Quinn and Michael Fullan book: **Coherence** (2016) a Coherence Framework is outlined into 4 areas: focusing direction, cultivating collaborative cultures, securing accountability (measuring impact) and deepening learning.

- When providing feedback colleagues were asked to categorize their feedback in one of the following 4 areas from the Coherence Framework:

- Focusing Direction: indicates that actions are purpose driven; that the set goals have impact; that there is clarity in the planned strategy; and that the leader manages the change
- Cultivating Collaborative Cultures: indicates that there is collaborative work happening, there is a culture of growth, that capacity building is occurring and that the leader is the lead learner
- Securing Accountability (Measuring Impact): increasing accountability within the school by constantly improving and refining instructional practice; occurs when individuals and groups willingly take on personal, professional and collective responsibility for continuous improvement; not limited to test score gains but on deeper and more meaningful learning for all students
- Deepening Learning: there is clarity in the learning goals; that there is precision in the pedagogy being applied; there is evidence of a shift in practice as a result of the capacity building

3. The evidence provided in this report is focused on the observations of colleagues and the feedback provided to the intensive and increased support schools.

C. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

<u>The findings of the midpoint check with intensive and increased support schools (64):</u>

1. Colleagues were instructed to provide each school with one piece of positive feedback, indicating an area in which the school is experiencing success. The feedback provided fell into the following areas: collaborative culture (44%), focusing direction (36%), measuring impact (11%) and deepening learning (9%). This data indicates that most of the intensive and increased support schools have collaborative culture or focusing direction as the area of strength.

2. Schools received specific focused feedback. This is a summary of the most common comments, provided to the schools, <u>that noted success</u>.

   Evidence of:
   - a positive collaborative culture witnessed in the areas of literacy, math and religion and in staff working together with resource staff and Ministry staff

- staff engagement, buy-in and risk-taking through learning together
- Principal leadership is key combined with distributed leadership
- clear focus and aligned SMART goals
- professional learning is responding to student needs
- positive goal setting and monitoring
- clear alignment between the student urgent critical learning need and the staff professional learning
- student voice
- data demonstrates and informs student progress and a prescribed focus
- clear pre-, mid-, and post assessment in some schools
- focus on specific skills in the area of math which is necessary for improvement
- good monitoring of process and student progress – for example: analyzing/discussing student work
- engagement of the whole staff in learning

3. This year, we are engaged in a pilot with MathUP School. MathUP School focuses on school improvement challenges that Principals face in math. It offers processes and tools to use in a math whole school improvement process.

   Feedback from the 16 Elementary Principals participating in the MathUP School pilot indicates that the program has provided them with structures and skills for monitoring student progress through school-wide math focused problems and analysis of results to guide targeted differentiation for students.

   Principals have indicated that the MathUP pilot has increased their math knowledge and provided direction for them to lead the instructional program.

   The MathUP pilot will be reviewed in detail at Education Council in March.

4. Professional colleagues were asked to provide each school with one piece of actionable feedback, indicating the area within the school requiring more focus. The feedback provided fell into the following areas: measuring impact (45%), deepening learning (23%), collaborative culture (16%) and focusing direction (16%). This data indicates that most of the intensive and increased support schools require more focus on measuring impact or deepening learning.

5.   Schools received specific focused feedback. This is a summary of the most common next steps suggestions provided to the schools to assist with addressing challenges:

- Need to tie Professional Learning to more detailed data analysis of student results
- Data indicating the success of focused work in the school needs to be more precise and specific related to student learning
- Ensure that student work assessments include the opportunities for student voice and choice
- Ensure professional learning ties directly to student urgent critical learning need
- Increase precision by becoming more specific in using evidence based strategies
- More professional learning specific to evidence based strategies needed
- Share learning amongst all teaching staff
- Build a stronger culture of learning among staff as it is critical to student success
- Ensure that all grades, all classrooms and all subject areas see themselves in the school goals and feel that they are contributing to school success
- Use the Professional Learning Community model as a good opportunity to share professional learning related to the school's urgent critical learning need
- Create goals that are less broad and more specific
- Focus on similar learning skills across all classrooms.

6.   Feedback was collected from the Principals of the intensive and increased support schools regarding this new process for monitoring School Learning Improvement Planning.

7.   When asked to reflect on the midpoint check process Principals provided various comments. The most common comment was that the greatest success is achieved when School Learning Improvement Planning is a

collaborative process between all staff, with the Principal as lead learner and supported by the School Superintendent.

8. When asked to reflect on the midpoint check process Principals provided various comments. Mentioned most consistently as the greatest challenge is the lack of occasional teachers thus interfering with momentum because schools had to cancel or reschedule planned professional learning sessions.

D. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS:

1. School Principals received verbal feedback at the conclusion of their midpoint check report presentation.

2. Written feedback is being provided to the Principals through their Area Superintendent.

3. The Ministry Student Achievement Officers and the Principal Instructional Math Coach will be meeting with the Principal of each intensive or increased support school, in March, to discuss in detail next steps with regard to professional learning and monitoring of student achievement.

4. At the March-April Principal meetings, Principals will be asked to bring student specific data for students who make up the school marker group (student to move) to discuss the evidence of progress for each student in the group.

5. Area Superintendents will continue to attend school organized professional learning, with a focus on the schools identified as needing more support.

6. Elementary schools identified as intensive or increased support schools work have a teacher assigned as a Numeracy/Literacy Coach to work with Grade 6 to 8 classrooms; and work closely with Central Resource staff in planning professional development.

7.   Principals of increased and intensive support schools can also request the support of a Principal Instructional Math Coach and/or a Student Achievement Officer from the Ministry of Education (recently re-engaged with schools on a limited basis, after the Ministry pause).

8.   Elementary intensive support schools also have the support of a centrally assigned Math Facilitator to work in K to Grade 6 classes. In addition, these schools are required to report through an online application: *Planning and Reporting for Improved Student Achievement* (PRISA). This tool is designed for schools to inform the Ministry of progress in the area of improved student achievement.

9.   All Secondary Schools are required to take part in the Ministry of Education initiative, *Achieving Excellence in Applied Level Courses (AEAC)*. AEAC requires secondary schools to report three times a year on student progress in Grade 9 Applied Mathematics. Schools have the option of tracking other cohort groups in Grade 9 and Grade 10 courses identified as requiring additional support. As a result of the Ministry of Education pause, schools began the process late this year (February 2019). Central Resource Staff work with school teams in completing the professional learning cycle in order to support students and provide teachers with professional learning opportunities. In addition, school principals are also supported by a Student Achievement Officer and a Principal Instructional Leader. Schools are required to report student performance data three times a year: March 5, April 30, and July 15.

E.   CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.